

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Gary W. & Sha Twanee Hosket, 9200 Yaak River Road, Troy, MT 59935
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 30024753-76B
3. *Water source name:* Yaak River
4. *Location affected by action:* SW of section 27, T 34N, R 33W, Lincoln County.
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met. The applicants wish to obtain a water use permit out of the Yaak River for a lawn & garden sprinkling system to be used on 3.07 acres. They will utilize a 1 ½ hp pump to divert water at a rate of 44 gpm with a maximum annual volume of 7.68 acre-feet. The period of diversion will be from April 15 through October 15. This system may also be used for wildfire protection on an as needed basis.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) MT Historical Society, MT Natural Heritage Program, the MT DEQ and the MT DFW & P website.

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: This source is not listed on the DFWP list.

Water quality - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

Determination: The source is not listed by DEQ as a quality impaired river.

Groundwater - Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.

Determination: NA

DIVERSION WORKS - Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

Determination: Installation of the initial pump will have minimal impacts on the river bank and riparian area. Any construction at the pump site may require a 310 permit from the Lincoln County CD.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

Determination: Although the Yaak River is home for Westslope Cutthroat Trout and a Canada Lynx may pass through this area from time to time, this action should have no adverse impact on any species of special concern.

Wetlands - Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.

Determination: NA

Ponds - For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.

Determination: NA

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.

Determination: This action will increase the soli moisture content, but there are no known areas of saline seep in the region.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.

Determination: The applicants have parked out this area and wish to irrigate their new seeding and plants. They will control all noxious weeds on their property.

AIR QUALITY - Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

Determination: No impacts.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Determination: No historic sites were identified on this lot. The home was built 14 years ago so any existing historic sites would probably have been removed years ago.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water, and energy not already addressed.

Determination: None identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

Determination: This area was subdivided years ago.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: No impacts

HUMAN HEALTH - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

Determination: No impacts.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes___ No_X_. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination:

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? None
 - (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Slight increase in revenues.
 - (c) Existing land uses? None
 - (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None
 - (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No changes
 - (f) Demands for government services? Slight if any.
 - (g) Industrial and commercial activity? None
 - (h) Utilities? Slight increase in demand for electricity to run pumps.
 - (i) Transportation? None
 - (j) Safety? None
 - (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None identified.
2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*** Over time there is bound to be a cumulative impact on the source. Just when that will be, no one knows.
3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None were justified as a result of this action.
4. ***Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*** The applicants could utilize their house well or drill an additional well, but either of these two alternatives would be more costly than the preferred alternative.

PART III. Conclusion

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Because no cumulative or significant impacts were identified as a result of this action, this EA is the adequate level of analysis for the action.

Name of person responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Wes McAlpin

Title: Water Resources Specialist, Kalispell RO DNRC Water Resources

Date: December 28, 2006